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E-MAN™

FIRST NOTES

FAMILY ALBUM

We've been trying to get this sucker into print for several months now, but this section has been squeezed out by the front-of-the-column material. So with all due apologies to the folks concerned, let me offer a belated welcome to our two most recent staff additions: Doug Rice, ace production assistant, and Ivy Graham, assistant to our office manager Kathy Kotsivas.

Ivy hails from Portland, Oregon — which means we're going to have a lot of cheap laughs at her expense come next winter. Ivy's the mother of our youngest reader, Joel, who's pushing two years. Joel's ambition is to grow up to be exactly like Jon Sable.

If you are a subscriber to any (or, hopefully, all) of our books, Ivy's the one who is responsible for your getting your magazine(s). When she's not babysitting Joel, she's babysitting our ever-growing staff — a tough, almost impossible job.

The name Doug Rice might be familiar to some of you: Doug's long been active in various aspects of comics fandom, and his stories and artwork have appeared in sundry fan and semi-professional publications ... most recently, in *Just Imagine* magazine.

Doug's own work is heavily influenced by Japanese animation — a field in which he's a bona fide expert. He's one of the leading fans responsible for the importation and public exhibition of Japanese cartoons — and you're really missing out on something if you haven't seen some of that stuff.

Among Doug's responsibilities are pasting up the house ad, letters column and First Notes pages and designing and pasting up our monthly First Edition circular which goes out to your friendly neighborhood comics store operator.

Welcome aboard, Ivy and Doug. And if you think things have been crazy thus far, hey, you ain't seen nothing yet.

Rick Obadiah, Publisher

Mike Gold, Managing Editor
Joe Staton, Art Director
Rick Oliver, Associate Editor
Bruce Patterson, Production Coordinator

Richard Felber, Business Manager
Kathy Kotsivas, Office Manager

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A FIRST COMICS PUBLISHING PRODUCTION

AFTER THE APOCOLYPSE

You've no doubt already noticed — particularly if you're reading this column in **Warp** — that this month we're finishing off our nine-part adaptation of the original Warp plays.

Next month, we'll be running our second **Warp Special,** focusing in on the early relationship between Lord Cumulus and Sargon. Just to make things even more interesting, we introduce a fantastic new character and disclose the heretofore undreamed of origin of Dagon. **Warp Special** #2 is a 28 pager, written by **Peter Gillis,** pencilled by **Mark** (King Conan) **Silvestri** — making his First Comics debut — and inked by **Mike Gustovich.**

Then in October, **Warp** #10 begins a whole new storyline, this time composed of several mini-epics which serve to allow our heroes to pick up their lives and take on new challenges. The penciller on this series, I'm extremely proud to say, is the ever-talented **Jerry Bingham.**

The lead story is being expanded to 20 pages, starting with #10 ... so we'll be beginning a new multi-part back-up series which introduces a major new character to the **Warp** saga. This back-up series will merge into the front-of-the-book series somewhere around issue #17 .. and with a little bit of luck, we should be able to go to book-length stories at that time. This new back-up is being written by the aforementioned Mr Gillis and pencilled by **Bill** (Valaria) **Willingham.**

THE FOURTH PLANET

Next month, we'll be telling you a bit about our newest monthly title. If you picked up last June's issues of **Warp** and/or **Starslayer,** you got an advance peak at the concept, but we'll tell you this much right now: if you're a fan of science fiction as it always was supposed to be (but rarely found in comics) ... if you're a fan of great comic book storytelling and fantastic art ... then **Mars** is going to knock you out of your socks.

Mark Wheatley and **Marc Hempel's Mars** #1 will hit your comics shop the very, very end of September ... along with **Warp Special** #2.

ALSO ...

Since we're hip-deep into hyping our butts off, we'd just like to point out there's something in **E-Man** #9 you've never seen before ... I mean, in addition to the new villain, Tyger Lili. What you've never, ever seen before is ... a **Joe Staton** script! Check it out — you're in for a few surprises.

— Mike Gold

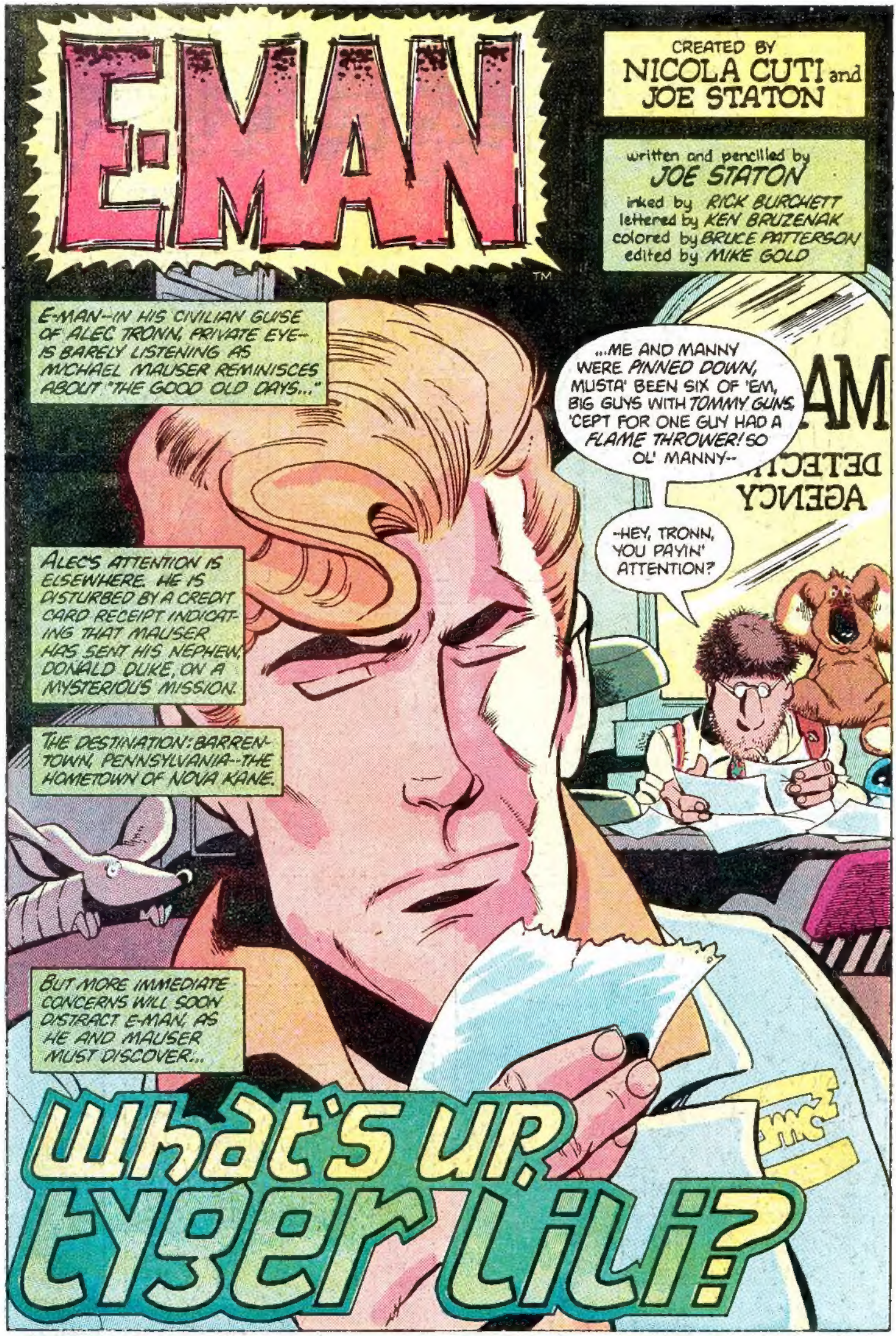
ON SALE NOW

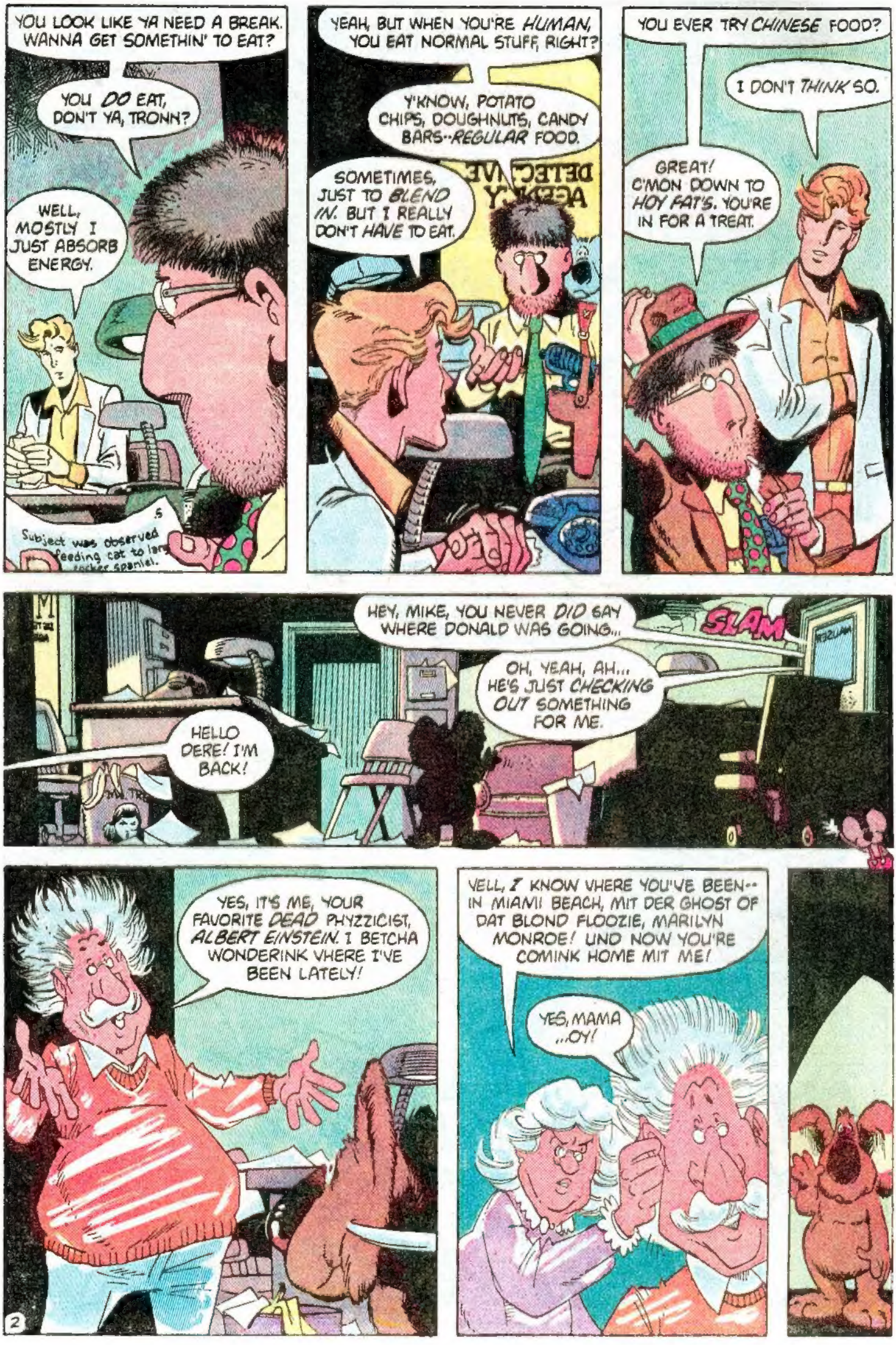
Starslayer #11: Torin Mac Quillon and company, now joined by his one-time foe Crayne — run for their lives — but do they run from or to *The Family?* **John Ostrander, Lenin Delsol** and **Mike Gustovich** provide the answer. And — Ostrander and **Tim Truman** wind-up the first **Grimjack** thriller — "Mortal Gods!"

American Flagg #3: "Killed in the Ratings," the amazing conclusion to Reuben Flagg's seminal adventure, "Hard Times." Action, thrills, bizarre plot twists and lots of unbelievably beautiful women — 28 pages of **Howard Chaykin's** finest!

Jon Sable, Freelance #7: Sable's assignment — to protect "The Target" from the Mob's big — and we really mean big — guns! Will our freelance adventurer make his last stand in a deserted skyscraper? Another **Mike Grell** book-length blockbuster!

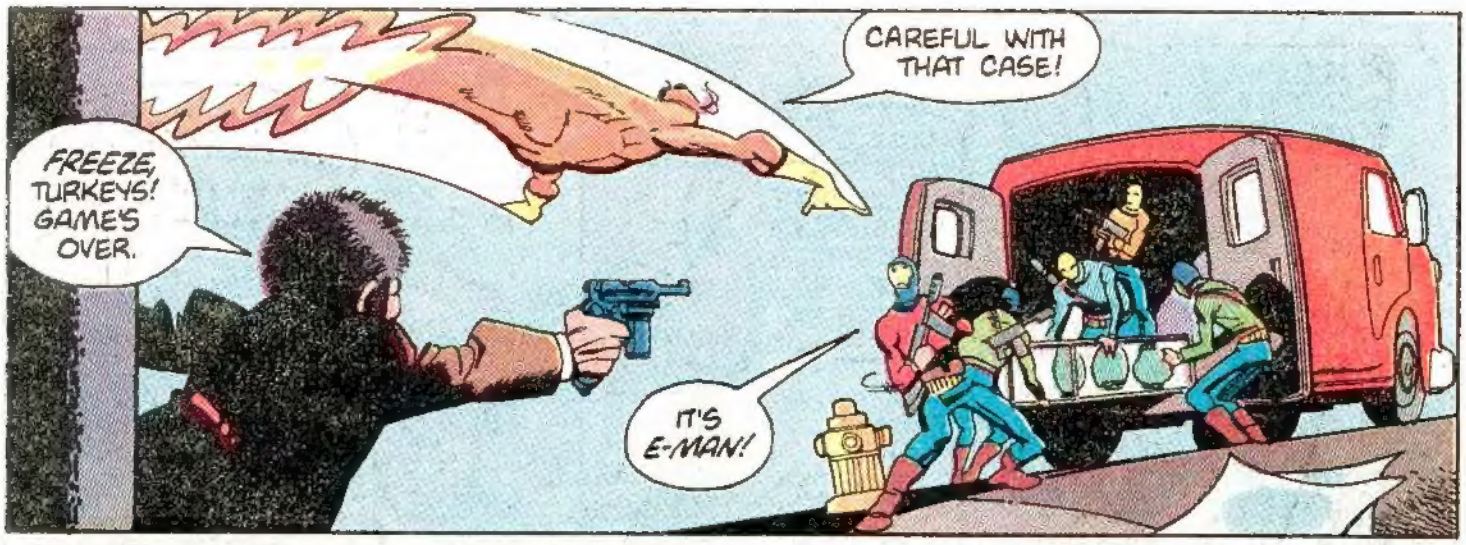
Warp #9: "The End of the Dream," the conclusion of the **Frank Brunner-Peter Gillis** adaptation of the hit plays (inked, of course, by **Mike Gustovich**)! The wind-up to the **Gillis/Willingham** Valaria story! All this in a precedent-shattering 29 — count 'em — 29 pages!

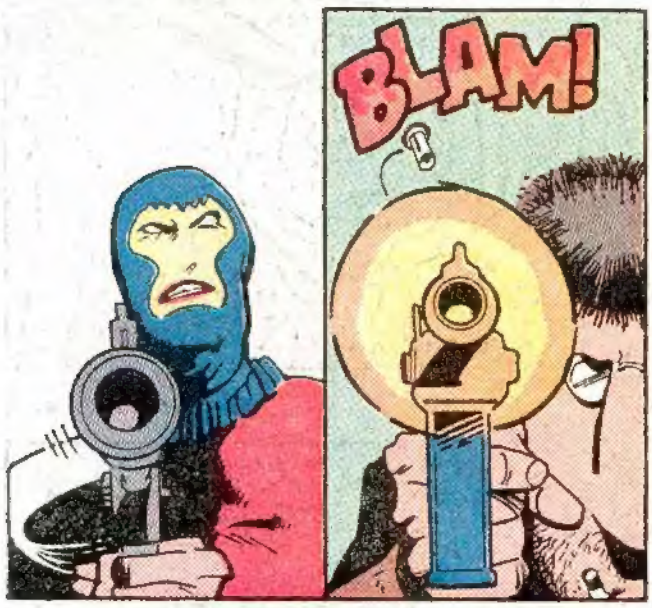

E-MAN
CREATED BY
NICOLA CUTI and
JOE STATON
written and pencilled by
JOE STATON
inked by RICK BURCHETT
lettered by KEN BRUZENAK
colored by BRUCE PATTERSON
edited by MIKE GOLD
E-MAN--IN HIS CIVILIAN GUISE OF ALEC TRONN, PRIVATE EYE--IS BARELY LISTENING AS MICHAEL MAUSER REMINISCES ABOUT "THE GOOD OLD DAYS..."
...ME AND MANNY WERE PINNED DOWN, MUSTA' BEEN SIX OF 'EM, BIG GUYS WITH TOMMY GUNS. 'CEPT FOR ONE GUY HAD A FLAME THROWER! SO OL' MANNY--
--HEY, TRONN, YOU PAYIN' ATTENTION?
ALEC'S ATTENTION IS ELSEWHERE. HE IS DISTURBED BY A CREDIT CARD RECEIPT INDICATING THAT MAUSER HAS SENT HIS NEPHEW, DONALD DUKE, ON A MYSTERIOUS MISSION.
THE DESTINATION: BARRENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA--THE HOMETOWN OF NOVA KANE.
BUT MORE IMMEDIATE CONCERNS WILL SOON DISTRACT E-MAN, AS HE AND MAUSER MUST DISCOVER...
What's up, tyger lily?


YOU LOOK LIKE YA NEED A BREAK. WANNA GET SOMETHIN' TO EAT?
YOU DO EAT, DON'T YA, TRONN?
WELL, MOSTLY I JUST ABSORB ENERGY.
Subject was observed feeding cat to large cocker spaniel.
YEAH, BUT WHEN YOU'RE HUMAN, YOU EAT NORMAL STUFF, RIGHT?
Y'KNOW, POTATO CHIPS, DOUGHNUTS, CANDY BARS--REGULAR FOOD.
SOMETIMES, JUST TO BLEND IN. BUT I REALLY DON'T HAVE TO EAT.
YOU EVER TRY CHINESE FOOD?
I DON'T THINK SO.
GREAT! C'MON DOWN TO HOY FAT'S. YOU'RE IN FOR A TREAT.
HEY, MIKE, YOU NEVER DID SAY WHERE DONALD WAS GOING...
SLAM
OH, YEAH, AH... HE'S JUST CHECKING OUT SOMETHING FOR ME.
HELLO DERE! I'M BACK!
YES, IT'S ME, YOUR FAVORITE DEAD PHYZZICIST, ALBERT EINSTEIN. I BETCHA WONDERINK VHERE I'VE BEEN LATELY!
YELL, I KNOW VHERE YOU'VE BEEN-- IN MIAMI BEACH, MIT DER GHOST OF DAT BLOND FLOOZIE, MARILYN MONROE! UND NOW YOU'RE COMINK HOME MIT ME!
YES, MAMA ...OY!
2

SHORTLY, DOWNSTAIRS...
I CAN'T TAKE TOO LONG, MIKE--I HAVE TO HELP NOVA REHEARSE HER SNAKE DANCE.
HER BOA CONSTRICTOR IS SICK, AND I PROMISED TO FILL-IN.
FLO'S
MAUSER DETECTIVE AGENCY
FAT
EAT-IN TAKE OUT
UHH, WHAT ARE THESE LITTLE STICKS, MIKE?
I KEEP FORGETTIN' YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS STUFF. THEY'RE CHOPSTICKS. YOU EAT WITH 'EM.
JUST WATCH ME.
MING DYNASTY VASES Do Not Touch!!
?
THERE ARE MANY SKILLS MIKE MAUSER IS QUALIFIED TO TEACH...
...THE USE OF LARGE HANDGUNS...
...SNEAKING AROUND IN DARK ALLEYS...
BUT DINING IS NOT ONE OF THEM.
HEY, TRONN, QUIT FOOLIN' AROUND-
-I THINK WE GOT TROUBLE.
3

NOBODY MOVE AND NOBODY GETS HURT!
JUST HAND OVER THE MING VASES AND WE'LL BE ON OUR WAY.
MING DYNASTY VASES Do Not Touch!!
NO, PLEASE! THE VASES ARE NOT MINE! THEY WERE LOANED TO ME! TO LOSE THEM WOULD MEAN GREAT LOSS OF FACE!
YER FACE AIN'T ALL YOU'LL LOSE IF YOU DON'T GET OUTTA THE WAY!
MAUSER HEARS A FAMILIAR CRACKLE OF ENERGY...
CAREFUL, TRONN. THIS PLACE IS CROWDED. WE DON'T WANT ANY CIVILIANS TO GET HURT. WAIT FOR MY SIGNAL.
VERY GOOD. EVERYBODY JUST STAY COOL.
I TOLD YOU WE SHOULDA GONE TO BURGERS 'R' US!
WHEN THE MASKED GUNMEN ARE OUTSIDE...
NOW, TRONN! HIT 'EM NOW!
4


FREEZE, TURKEYS! GAME'S OVER.
CAREFUL WITH THAT CASE!
IT'S E-MAN!


BLAM!

OWTCH!

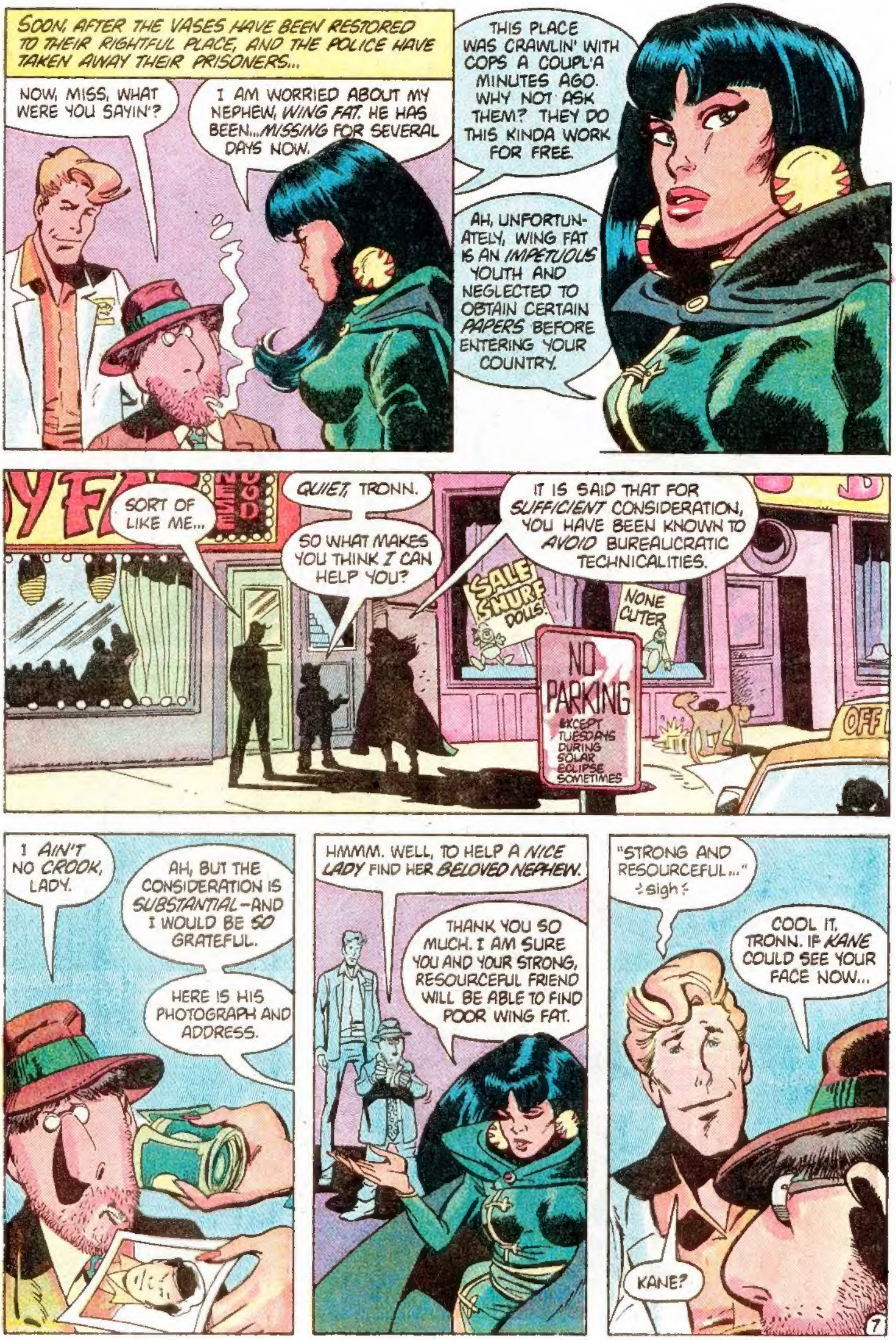
DON'T SHOOT! WE GIVE UP!
YEAH, WE GOT ENOUGH OF DEM FLOWER POTS ALREADY!
YOU CAN HAVE THESE BACK!

HEY! DON'T ALL RAISE YOUR HANDS AT ONCE-- YOU'RE GONNA DROP...
KRASH!
...THE CASE.

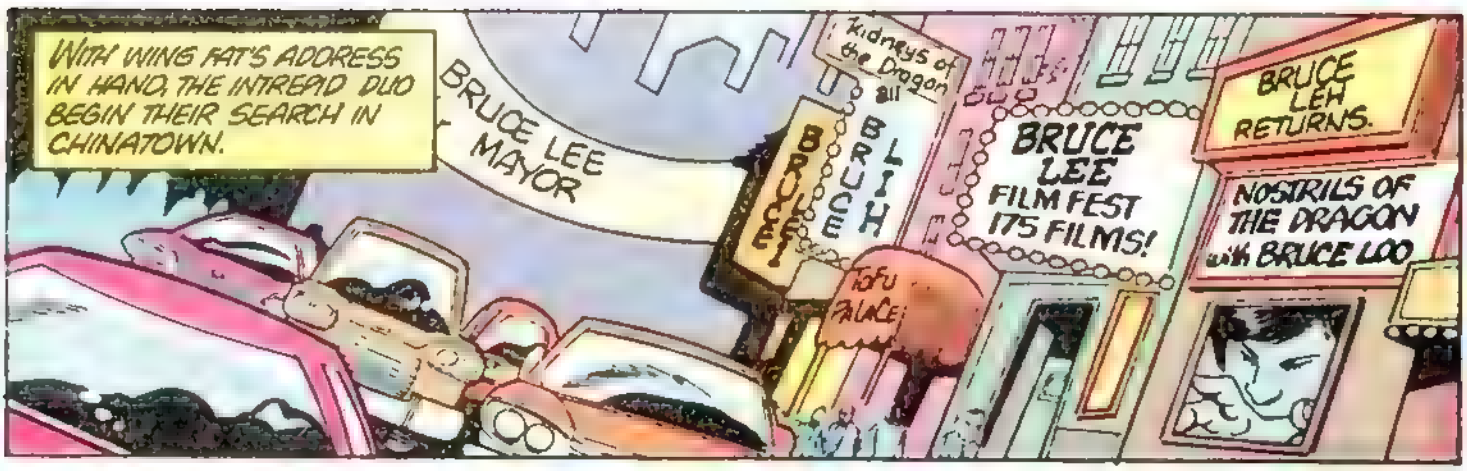
A PRICELESS VASE TUMBLES FREE...
UH-OH.

SMASH!

SORRY, MIKE, I MISSED ONE AND IT BROKE!
GEEZ, I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO SHOW MY FACE IN HOY FAT'S AGAIN! CAN'T YA FIX IT SOMEHOW?
HMM, MAYBE A LITTLE MANIPULATION OF THE SUBATOMIC ENERGY FLUX PATTERNS...
ZZZZZ
THERE! ALL FIXED. GOOD AS NEW.
NICE GOIN'. NOW NOBODY HAS TO LOSE FACE.
MEBBE HE COULD DO THAT FOR MY TRENCHCOAT?
BUT AS E-MAN AND MAUSER ADMIRE THEIR HANDIWORK...
EXCUSE, PLEASE, BUT HONORABLE HEROES MISSED A PIECE.
THANKS, UH...
CAREFUL, TRONN, DON'T DROOL ON MY HAT!
I DON'T THINK I CAUGHT YER NAME, MISS.
ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF. I AM CALLED--
--TYGER LILI!
OOOOEEEOOOOOEEEOOOOEEEOOOOEEE


SOON, AFTER THE VASES HAVE BEEN RESTORED TO THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE, AND THE POLICE HAVE TAKEN AWAY THEIR PRISONERS...
NOW, MISS, WHAT WERE YOU SAYIN'?
I AM WORRIED ABOUT MY NEPHEW, WING FAT. HE HAS BEEN...MISSING FOR SEVERAL DAYS NOW.
THIS PLACE WAS CRAWLIN' WITH COPS A COUPL'A MINUTES AGO. WHY NOT ASK THEM? THEY DO THIS KINDA WORK FOR FREE.
AH, UNFORTUNATELY, WING FAT IS AN IMPETUOUS YOUTH AND NEGLECTED TO OBTAIN CERTAIN PAPERS BEFORE ENTERING YOUR COUNTRY.
SORT OF LIKE ME...
QUIET, TRONN.
SO WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I CAN HELP YOU?
IT IS SAID THAT FOR SUFFICIENT CONSIDERATION, YOU HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO AVOID BUREAUCRATIC TECHNICALITIES.
SALE SMURF DOLLS!
NONE CUTER
NO PARKING
EXCEPT TUESDAYS DURING SOLAR ECLIPSE SOMETIMES
I AIN'T NO CROOK, LADY.
AH, BUT THE CONSIDERATION IS SUBSTANTIAL—AND I WOULD BE SO GRATEFUL.
HERE IS HIS PHOTOGRAPH AND ADDRESS.
HMMM. WELL, TO HELP A NICE LADY FIND HER BELOVED NEPHEW.
THANK YOU SO MUCH. I AM SURE YOU AND YOUR STRONG, RESOURCEFUL FRIEND WILL BE ABLE TO FIND POOR WING FAT.
"STRONG AND RESOURCEFUL..."
:sigh:
COOL IT, TRONN. IF KANE COULD SEE YOUR FACE NOW...
KANE?
7

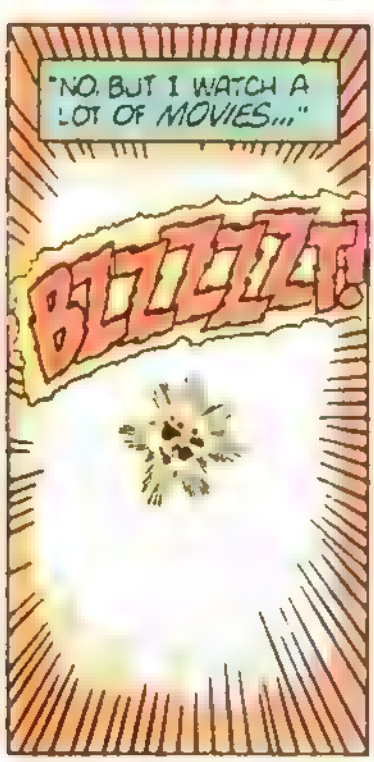
...KANE? KANE! NOVA!
OMIGOSH! MIKE! I GOTTA MAKE A CALL.
BACK INSIDE HOY FAT'S...
MEN
WOMEN
OTHER
HE SURE DON'T LOOK LIKE NO SUPERHERO TO ME!
AND YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE NO MOVIE DIRECTOR.
GEE, I'M SORRY, NOVA-BUT MIKE AND I GOT INVOLVED IN THIS REALLY HOT CASE...
I DON'T CARE WHO YOU'RE INVOLVED WITH! YOU PROMISED YOU'D BE HERE FOR REHEARSAL.
HYUKKK!
OOG.
THIS STUPID BOA CONSTRICTOR HAS SWINE FLU OR SOMETHING AND THAT STUFFED SNAKE YOU BOUGHT ME LOOKS LIKE A REFUGEE FROM BEANIE AND CECIL!
HYYUUUAAKKH!
...SO YOU HAD JUST BETTER SHOW UP, MR. BIGSHOT PRIVATE EYE-SLASH-SUPERHERO!
C'MON, TRONN, WE GOT WORK TO DO.
NOVA, I HAVE TO GO. I'M SORRY ABOUT REHEARSAL... BUT I'LL MAKE IT IN TIME FOR THE SHOW. I PROMISE.
8

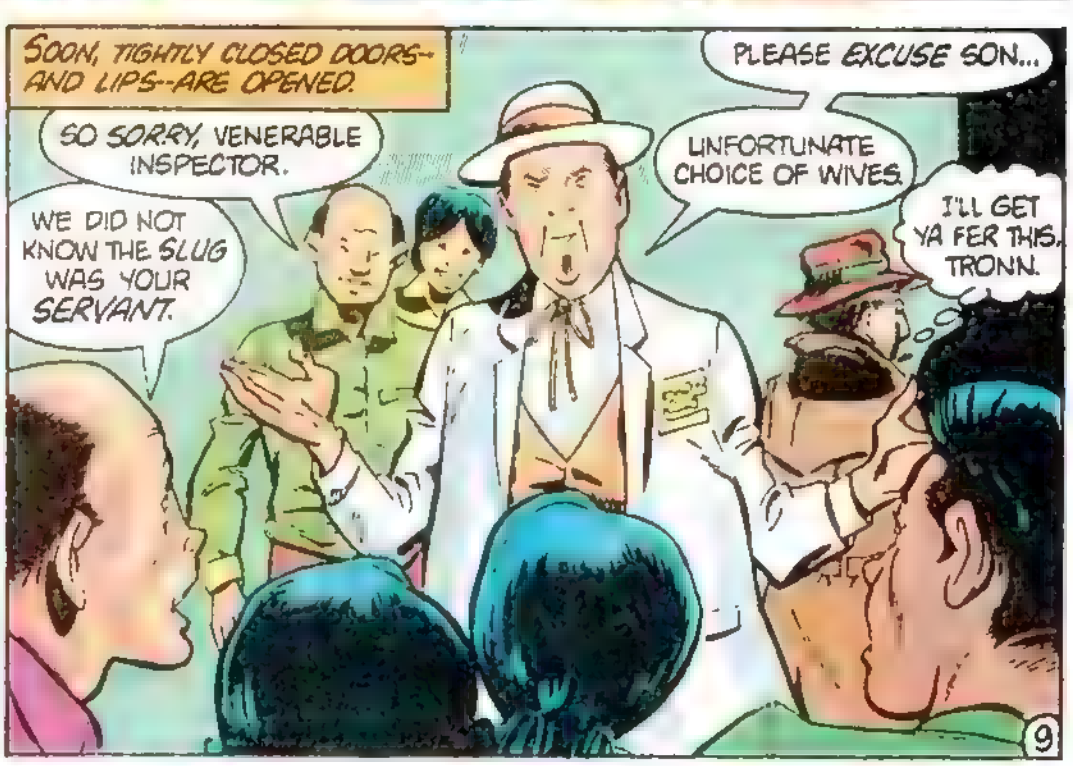

WITH WING FAT'S ADDRESS IN HAND, THE INTREPID DUO BEGIN THEIR SEARCH IN CHINATOWN.
BRUCE LEE MAYOR
Kidneys of the Dragon all
BRUCE LEE
BRUCE LEE FILM FEST 175 FILMS!
BRUCE LEE RETURNS.
NOSTRILS OF THE DRAGON with BRUCE LOO
Tofu Palace

MAUSER APPLIES HIS AWESOME SKILLS OF INTERROGATION ON WING'S NEIGHBORS...
WING WHO?
NOT WING HO. WING FAT.

..THE RESULTS ARE SOMEWHAT LESS THAN SATISFACTORY.
NEVER HEARD OF HIM!

IT'S NO USE--THESE GUYS WON'T OPEN UP TO AN OUTSIDER.
MAYBE I SHOULD GIVE IT A TRY.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, TRONN-
-YOU DON'T KNOW THESE PEOPLE..

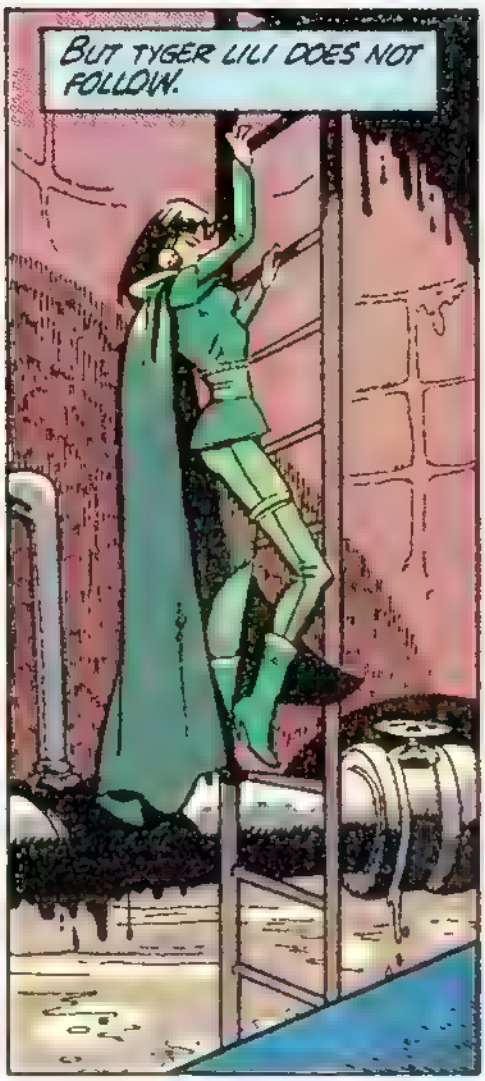

"NO. BUT I WATCH A LOT OF MOVIES..."
BLLLLLT!

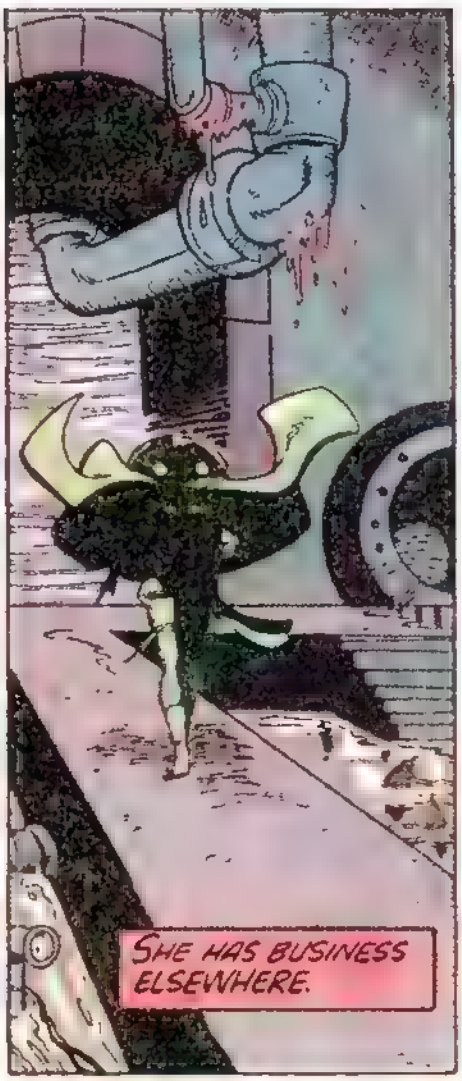

SOON, TIGHTLY CLOSED DOORS-- AND LIPS--ARE OPENED.
SO SORRY, VENERABLE INSPECTOR.
WE DID NOT KNOW THE SLUG WAS YOUR SERVANT.
PLEASE EXCUSE SON...
UNFORTUNATE CHOICE OF WIVES.
I'LL GET YA FER THIS, TRONN.

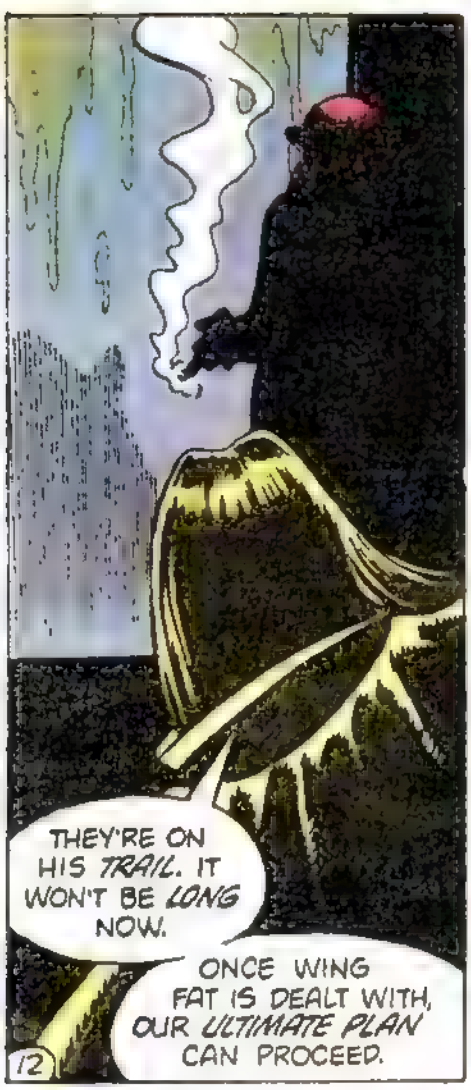
E-MAN'S PLOY IS SUCCESSFUL BUT UNINFORMATIVE...
OKAY, YOU GOT 'EM TO TALK. SO WHAT? THEY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT WING FAT.
SO WHAT NEXT?
REAL TOURIST JUNK SOLD HERE!
WE CHECK OUT WING'S APARTMENT- MAYBE SOMETHIN' WILL TURN UP THERE.
I BETTER CALL NOVA AND TELL HER WE'RE RUNNING LATE.
TRONN, YOU LET THAT BRASSY BIMBO YANK YA AROUND TOO MUCH!
BACK AT THE MOIST PALMS...
NO, ALEC, THE SNAKE ISN'T ANY BETTER. I THINK HE MUST HAVE EATEN SOMETHING MAUSER LEFT HERE.
MIKE, I TOLD YOU BEFORE--SHE'S NOT LIKE THAT.
OKAY, OKAY. LET'S JUST DROP IT FOR NOW
I'M SORRY THIS IS TAKING SO LONG, BUT I'LL TRY TO MAKE IT IN TIME FOR YOUR ACT.
TRY? BUT...
BY THE WAY, NOVA, YOU'RE ORIGINALLY FROM BARRENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, AREN'T YOU?
YEAH, BUT YOU KNOW THAT ALREADY. WHY? WHAT'S UP?
OH, NOTHING. JUST WONDERING.

NEXT STOP: WING FAT'S APARTMENT BUILDING.
THE DOOR'S LOCKED, MIKE!
GEEZ, TRONN, DIDJA THINK HE'D LEAVE IT OPEN FOR US?
ANYWAY, NO LITTLE LOCK EVER STOPPED ME BEFORE.
BUT THIS IS BREAKING AND ENTERING!
SPLANG!
NO, THIS IS BUSINESS
PLACE LOOKS NORMAL ENOUGH...
WAIT... I'M GETTING SOMETHING.
AS AN ENERGY BEING, I'M SENSITIVE TO OTHER FORMS OF ENERGY--
-AND I'M PICKING UP SOME LOW-LEVEL RADIATION... RIGHT...OVER...
...HERE! IN THE BEDROOM.
AND THERE'S A RADIOACTIVE TRAIL LEADING OUT THE WINDOW, ON TO THE FIRE ESCAPE!
EAGER TO FOLLOW THE TRAIL WHILE IT'S STILL "HOT" (SO TO SPEAK), E-MAN RESHAPES HIS MOLECULES TO BECOME:
A GEIGER-HOUND, FOR SNIFFING RADIO-ACTIVITY! C'MON, MIKE, GRAB MY LEASH AND LET'S GO!
UH, SHOULDN'T WE BE WEARIN' PROTECTIVE SUITS OR SOMETHIN?
IT'S JUST A TRACE, MIKE. IT'S NOT EVEN AS HARMFUL AS THAT CIGARETTE IN YOUR MOUTH. *
* ED NOTE: OF COURSE, SMOKING IS BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH-SEE WHAT IT DID TO MAUSER'S GROWTH--MIKE.

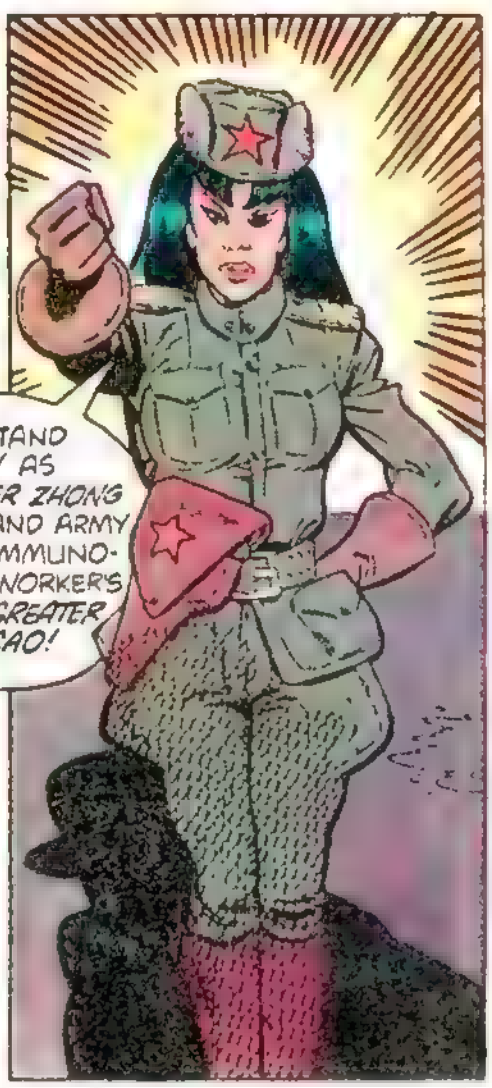
BUT WHAT'S THIS? EVEN AS E-MAN HEADS OFF WITH MAUSER IN TOW, THEY ARE OBSERVED BY A FAMILIAR FIGURE.


BUT TYGER LILI DOES NOT FOLLOW.


SHE HAS BUSINESS ELSEWHERE.


THEY'RE ON HIS TRAIL. IT WON'T BE LONG NOW.
ONCE WING FAT IS DEALT WITH, OUR ULTIMATE PLAN CAN PROCEED.
12

THEN I SHALL SHED THE RACIST, SEXIST SHAM OF TYGER LILI...
...AND STAND PROUDLY AS COMMANDER ZHONG OF THE GRAND ARMY OF THE COMMUNO-SOCIALIST WORKER'S PARTY OF GREATER MACAO!



UNAWARE OF WHAT TRANSPIRES IN THE BOWELS OF THE CITY, E-MAN AND MAUSER CONTINUE THEIR SEARCH FOR WING FAT...
HEY, TRONN, WHERE ARE WE GOIN'? MAKE UP YOUR MIND!
SORRY. BUT YOU'D BE SURPRISED HOW MANY DIFFERENT RADIOACTIVE TRACES THERE ARE IN THIS TOWN.
THERE'S EVEN A RADIOACTIVE SPIDER!
HEY, MIKE, DO YOU THINK IF IT BIT YOU, YOU'D GET SPIDER-LIKE POWERS?
GEEZ, TRONN, WHAT A STUPID IDEA.
WHAT YOU'D GET IS RADIATION POISONING. THEN YOU'D GET DEAD.
IT WAS JUST A THOUGHT. AH, I THINK I'VE GOT THE RIGHT TRAIL NOW.
IT LEADS RIGHT TO THAT, UH, HOTEL.
THIS CASE GETS FISHIER BY THE MINUTE.
I DON'T THINK WING FAT WAS ABDUCTED BY RADIOACTIVE THUGS, WHO THEN DRAGGED HIM TO A HOTEL.
THE DeCAING ARMS
BATH 50¢
$1
13

AS E-MAN AND MAUSER PONDER THEIR SITUATION, DONALD DUKE HAS PROBLEMS OF HIS OWN.
NOBODY TOLD ME THEY CANCELLED THE LAST LEG OF THE FLIGHT TO BARRENTOWN...
...AND THE ONLY WAY TO GET THERE WAS BY BUS!
LOOK OUT!
YOU'RE GONNA...
PASSENGER PIGEON TRAILWAYS
THE SCREECH OF BRAKES BLENDS WITH THE ROAR OF MOTORCYCLE ENGINES.
BARRENTOWN
PASSENGER PIGEON TRAILWAYS
HAR HAR!
NICE DRIVIN' BOZO!
THANK THE LORD NOBODY WAS HURT!
WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
WELL, CITY BOY, YOU KIN USE YER FEET OR YOU KIN USE YER THUMB...
ONE OR T'OTHER!
PASSENGER PIGEON TRAILWAYS
BARRENTOWN 20 mi.
THIS IS NOT EXACTLY WHAT I HAD IN MIND WHEN I SIGNED ON TO BE A PRIVATE EYE.
14

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE HOTEL...
WELL, LET'S CHECK THIS PLACE OUT.
UH, MIKE...
YOU AIN'T GOTTA GO TO THE BATHROOM. SO...WAIT, DON'T TELL ME--YOU GOTTA CALL KANE AGAIN!?
...I HAVE TO...
WELL, IT'S GETTING LATE, AND I DID PROMISE NOVA I'D BE THERE, AND...
HOO BOY!
WHERE ARE YOU? THE REAL SNAKE IS COMATOSE, AND THE STUFFING IS COMING OUT OF THE FAKE ONE...
I'M SORRY, NOVA, BUT YOU KNEW I COULD GET TIED UP ON CASES WHEN I TOOK THIS JOB WITH MAUSER.
WELL, I NEVER TOLD YOU TO TAKE THE LITTLE RUNT'S JOB, DID I!?
WHY DON'T YOU SEE IF HE'LL LET YOU SLEEP IN HIS CAR BATTERY!
BRRRNNNG
ARE YOU GONNA DO SOMETHING ELSE WITH THAT PHONE, OR CAN WE DO SOME INVESTIGATING NOW?
15

INSIDE THE DeCAING ARMS...
I TOLDJA, BUB, THERE AIN'T NO WING FAT HERE!
HOWSABOUT I CHECK THE REGISTER MYSELF?
YOU LOOKIN' TA GET SHORTER, HALF-PINT?
NO, WE'LL TAKE YOUR WORD FOR IT.
I GOTTA GET A LOOK AT THAT REGISTER.
I'VE GOT AN IDEA...
E-MAN DUCKS BEHIND A PILLAR, ONLY TO BE REPLACED BY...
HIYA, BIG FELLA. YA' WANNA COME OUTSIDE AND HELP ME START MY MASERATI?
OH, MAMA!!
AS THE ENTHRALLED DESK CLERK FOLLOWS E-MAIDEN OUTSIDE, MAUSER RIFLES THE REGISTER.
SOMETIMES I THINK TRONN AIN'T GOT NO SHAME...
I'M SO PROUD OF THAT BOY!
HMM...NO WING FAT, BUT HERE'S A FING WAT!
WELL, IF IT AIN'T MISS HOBOKEN OF 1973. WHERE'S YOUR BUDDY, GODZILLA?
I LEFT HIM OUTSIDE TRYING TO HOTWIRE AN ABANDONED STUDEBAKER.
SHOULD TAKE HIM ABOUT SIX YEARS...
16

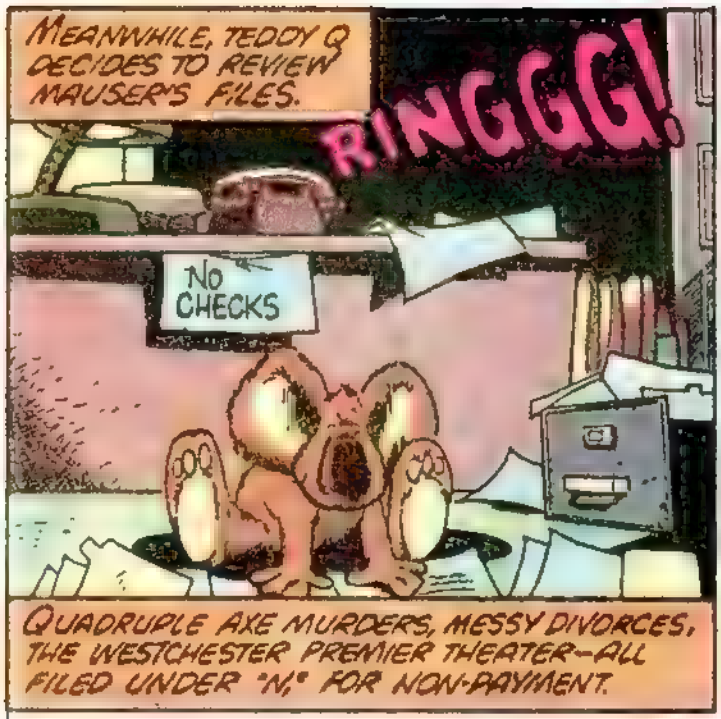
HEY! ISN'T THAT WING FAT?
IT SURE DON'T LOOK LIKE HE WANTS TO BE FOUND-- HE'S HEADIN' OUT THE WINDOW!
MIKE, WE'RE SUPPOSED TO FIND HIM, NOT KILL HIM!
OH. SORRY. I JUST GET CARRIED AWAY SOMETIMES...
WING FAT SCRAMBLES ONTO THE FIRE ESCAPE...
...LEAVING PURSUIT BEHIND...
ALMOST!
HI THERE!
WHY DON'T WE GO BACK UPSTAIRS AND TALK ABOUT THIS?
YIPE!

SO YOU SEE WHY I FLED FROM YOU.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE HER AGENTS.
I CAME TO YOUR COUNTRY HOPING TO MAKE MUCH MONEY DESIGNING VIDEO GAMES...
BUT, AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE NO PAPERS AND COULD NOT FIND A JOB.
THEN I WAS APPROACHED BY THE WOMAN CALLED TYGER LIL!
"KNOWING FULL WELL THAT I WAS AN ILLEGAL ALIEN, SHE GAVE ME A JOB IN HER LABORATORY-SHE OFFERED WORK TO ANY CHINESE WITH A KNOWLEDGE OF ELECTRONICS.
"I DID NOT QUESTION THE NATURE OF MY ASSIGNMENT.
"HOWEVER, ONE NIGHT, WHILE WORKING LATE, I FOUND SHE HAD NEGLECTED TO LOCK-UP HER SECRET PLANS.
"IT WAS WITH HORROR THAT I LEARNED THE TRUE NATURE OF THE DEVICE WE WERE BUILDING...
"LIKE A NEUTRON BOMB, IT WOULD EMIT LETHAL RADIATION, KILLING MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WHILE LEAVING BUILDINGS UNSCATHED.
"IT WAS PART OF SOME INSANE SCHEME TO MAKE MACAO A MAJOR WORLD POWER.
"I TOOK THE PLANS AND THE WORKING MODEL OF THE DEVICE AND FLED INTO THE NIGHT.
18

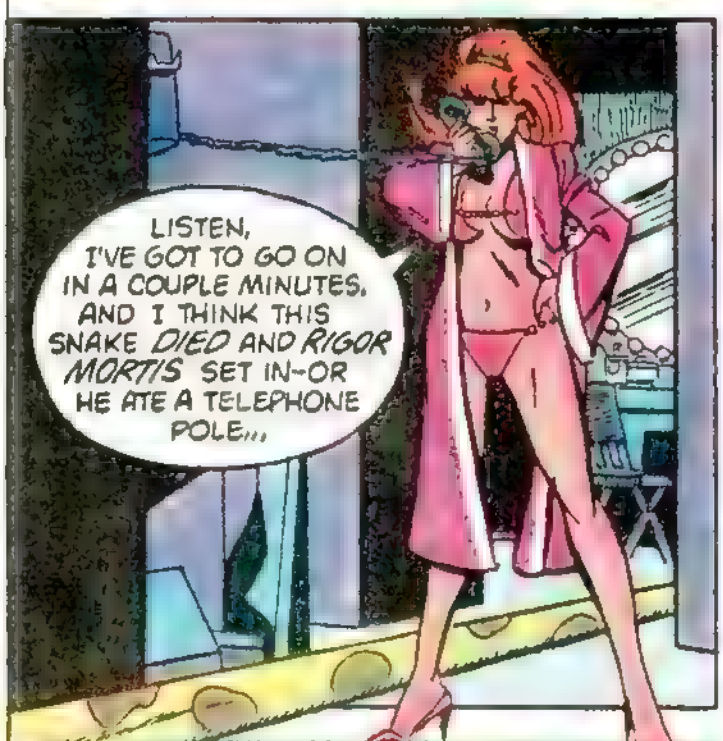
"IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE TYGER LILI DISCOVERED MY DEFECTION.
BRING ME THE MUTILATED CORPSE OF WING FAT!
AND THE PLANS FOR THAT ELECTRONIC THINGIE, TOO!
"NO PLACE WAS SAFE. I HAD TO KEEP MOVING CONSTANTLY...
"...FOR BEHIND ME, I KNEW, LURKED TYGER LILI'S HIRED KILLERS.
"AND BEHIND THEM STALKED SOMETHING FAR MORE TERRIFYING...
"...HER DREADED SHOGUN ASSASSINS!"
AND JUST AS A PRECAUTION, SHE HIRED ME, TOO! BUT THAT MEANS WE WERE PROBABLY FOLL-
--UH-OH, I THINK WE GOT COMPANY!
KLUNK!

KK-RRAAASHH!
YOW!
OH NO! THEY HAVE FOUND ME!
YOU COULDN'T HAVE JUST KNOCKED?
GET BACK, KID! WE'LL HANDLE THE GUYS IN THE IRON ZOOT SUITS. YOU STAY PUT!
HEY, AIN'T YOU SHOGUNS SUPPOSED TO BE JAPS?
PICKY, PICKY, PICKY. DO NOT BE DIFFICULT, RODENT-LIKE ONE.
GIVE ME THE PLANS AND THE DEVICE, AND MY SHOGUN ASSASSINS WILL HURT YOU ONLY SLIGHTLY
YOU CANNOT HOPE TO STAND AGAINST ME.
HOPE AIN'T MY LINE'A BUSINESS.
BESIDES, ME AND MY PARTNER AIN'T EXACTLY PUSHOVERS
NO ONE CAN STAND AGAINST MY SHOGUNS' ENERGY BLADES!
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT!
ZZLBBBTTT!
20

KKRAAK
SMAASSH!
VIVISECT THEM MY SHOGUNS!
LOOK OUT FOR THE RICOCHET, MIKE.
I CAN'T BLAST THROUGH THOSE BLADES!
ZZLAAPP!
BLAM!
BLAM!
YEAH, AND MY 9MM's JUST BOUNCE OFF THEIR ARMOR!
CLOSE!
WHOOM!
CAREFUL, TRONN, WE DON'T KNOW WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF ONE OF THOSE BLADES ACTUALLY HITS YOU!
I'M NOT DOING SO WELL AS A SUPERHERO...
SO LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS IF I FIGHT THESE GUYS ON THEIR OWN TERMS.
21

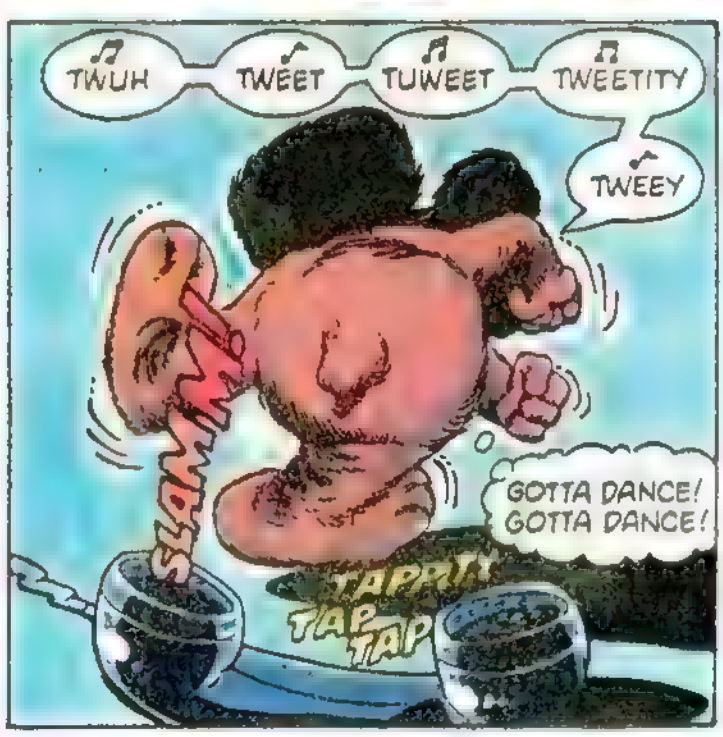

MEANWHILE, TEDDY Q DECIDES TO REVIEW MAUSER'S FILES.
RINGGG!
NO CHECKS
QUADRUPLE AXE MURDERS, MESSY DIVORCES, THE WESTCHESTER PREMIER THEATER—ALL FILED UNDER "N," FOR NON-PAYMENT.

MAUSER? IS THAT YOU? IS ALEC THERE?
?


LISTEN, I'VE GOT TO GO ON IN A COUPLE MINUTES. AND I THINK THIS SNAKE DIED AND RIGOR MORTIS SET IN—OR HE ATE A TELEPHONE POLE...

...MAUSER? ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME? PUT ALEC ON! MAUSER?
?

TWEE
TWEET
TUH
TWEET
!?!


TWUH
TWEET
TUWEET
TWEETITY
TWEEY
SLAMMIN'
GOTTA DANCE! GOTTA DANCE!
TAPPITY TAP TAP

BUT IN WING FAT'S HOTEL ROOM...
...THE FIGHT IS GRIM...
...SILENT...
...SAVAGE...
...AND ENTIRELY IN THE DARK!
HEY, WHO TURNED OFF THE LIGHTS! I COULD'VE SWORN IT WAS MIDAFTERNOON OUTSIDE!

TAKE THAT! AND THAT!
HEY, TRONN, COOL IT! TAKE IT EASY WITH THE HACKIN' AND CHOPPIN'...
HACK!
CHOP!
CHOP!
WHAT THE-! THOSE GUYS ARE JUST ROBOTS!
SURE. YOU DIDN'T THINK I'D DO ANYTHING LIKE THAT TO REAL PEOPLE, DID YOU?
NO. BUT I WOULD. PREPARE TO DIE, SHRIMP TOAST!
FERGET IT, SISTER! I GOTTA WRAP UP THIS CASE FIRST!
OW!
WHEEENG!
MEANWHILE, HALFWAY TO THE NEXT FLOOR, WING FAT HAS DECIDED NOT TO WAIT AROUND FOR THE BATTLE'S OUTCOME...

PARTY'S OVER, SISTER, AND IT LOOKS LIKE YOU WIN THE BOOBY PRIZE.
CAREFUL WITH THAT GUN, MAUSER. YOU WOULDN'T WANT IT TO GO OFF ACCIDENTLY.
YEAH, THAT'D BE A REAL SHAME.
HEY, BUB, DID YOU SEE A GORGEOUS BLONDE COME UP THIS WAY?
LOOK OUT, YOU FOOL!
I GOT HER CAR STARTED AND...
THUMP
WHAT'S THAT?
THUMPITY THUMP THUMP THUMPITTY THUD
HEY, WHERE'S WING FAT?
UH-OH!
OH, NO!! THE FALL HAS ACTIVATED THE RAY DEVICE!
WHIRR TIC TIC TIC
IN ONE MINUTE IT WILL EMIT A MASSIVE BURST OF GAMMA RAYS!
HUH?
25

WHAT'S GOIN' ON OUT HERE?
THE DEVICE WILL FIRE IN LESS THAN 60 SECONDS! I CANNOT DISARM IT!
UH-OH.
UH, TRONN, ISN'T THERE SOMETHING YOU CAN DO?
LIKE MAYBE FROM INSIDE OR SOMETHING?
RIGHT!
TICTICTICTICTIC
CTICTICTICTICTI
THE INTERIOR OF THE DEVICE IS A BEWILDERING MAZE OF ELECTRONIC CIRCUITRY.
WOW, THIS IS COMPLICATED.
TICTICTICTIC
TICTICTICTIC
ICTICTICTICTI
HUH?
CTICTICTICTICTICTICTICTICTICTICTIC
...SO THE TRIPLE RELAY IS CONNECTED TO THE...
...AND THE ELECTRO-SYNAPSE BYPASSES THE...
WHAT A DAY! AS IF TYGER LILI WEREN'T ENOUGH...
TYGER LILI!

MAUSER RUSHES UP THE STAIRS...
I BET SHE'S HEADED FOR--
-THE FIRE ESCAPE.
WELL, YOU WEAR HIGH HEELS ON A FIRE ESCAPE YOU DESERVE A SPRAINED ANKLE!
YOU SUPERVILLAINESS-TYPES HAVE JUST GOT TO WORK ON MORE PRACTICAL OUTFITS!
TIC TICT-- THUNK
WHIRRR
THE DEVICE HAS BEEN DISABLED! I MUST LEAVE BEFORE THE POLICE ARRIVE!
MAYBE DAT BLONDE WENT DIS WAY...
TAA-DAA!
NO SWEAT, GUYS. I JUST SAVED THE ENTIRE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT, AND...
...UH, GUYS...?
HEY, WHERE IS EVERYBODY?
OH, WELL, I GUESS MAUSER CAN TAKE CARE OF THINGS HERE...
...AND I ONLY HAVE 1.3 SECONDS TO GET TO THE MOIST PALMS CLUB AND HELP NOVA...
...IF SHE'S STILL TALKING TO ME!
AS E-MAN HEADS FOR THE CLUB AND TYGER LILI HEADS FOR JAIL, DONALD DUKE HEADS FOR PENNSYLVANIA TO DIG UP THE PLOT FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE: ON THE ROAD TO BARRENTOWN, WE FIND SOME ANSWERS, SOME QUESTIONS, AND...
BLACKLUNG

E-MAIL

%FIRST COMICS, 1014 DAVIS STREET, EVANSTON, ILLINOIS 60201

Dear First:

I've been meaning to write to you about what I think of E-Man ever since #1 was issued, but it might prompt you to make changes in your comic that I probably won't like. So I hope you won't be too offended if I never get around to writing.

John Williams
1412 Butternut
Royal Oak, MI 48073

O.K., John, we'll look forward to not hearing from you.

Dear E-Man:

I write "Dear E-Man" but do not refer to the superhero him/it/themself(ves). I gave up writing to energy beings long ago and he probably wouldn't answer my letter anyway. The E-Man I refer to in my intro is the comic book, although I admit writing to a magazine is none too sane.

But enough of that nonsense and on to other nonsense, as Steve Allen used to say. I have written to comic books before but this will be the first time I mailed the letter. I have planned to write to E-Man for some time but something in #5 spurred me on. This was the surprise mention of (fanfare) Forensics on the first page. Up until I read that page I thought Forensic was known only to members of the Michigan Interscholastic Forensic Association and other such organizations. All of us in Forensics thank you for the publicity. But even though I imagine most of your readership does not understand the meaning of Forensics I will not attempt to explain it.

And now a few general comments. Please keep the same mix of humor and superheroing (?) and keep Albert Einstein. But if you must get rid of Al maybe you could bring in other geniuses, i.e.: Francis Bacon, Da Vinci, Curie, Aristophanes, et al. And do not let Martin Pasko leave the magazine. I like Marty. As a matter of fact I have to close now because I am going to roll my forehead into the typewriter and type Martin Pasko over my eyebrows. I wish I could send you a picture of this incredible sight but my dog is fighting with James Garner and won't let me use the camera. So until liverwurst becomes liverFirst I remain and my remains remain:

Paul S.S. Sternberg
19737 Bentler
Detroit, MI 48219

Hey, we were looking for a superteam book.

Unfortunately, #7 was Marty's last plot-and-script issue, and next month's #10 will be Marty's last plot on **E-Man.** *Marty's hip deep in Saturday morning TeeVee, which consumes both time and sanity. So, effective with this issue, some guy named Joe Staton is taking over the writing chores. Too bad about your eyebrows.*

Dear Mike, Joe, Marty, Bruce, Reed, and anybody else:

Three cheers and a 21-gun salute! I just bought E-Man #5 and I wanted to take the chance to say thanks for including that

one-page comic short of Reed Waller's Omaha, The Cat-Dancer. Ever since I first saw her in Reed's premiere black-and-white publication, I've been a fan of his work. That page was worth the price of the whole comic (as a matter of fact, that's the reason I bought the book)! I hope we'll be seeing more of Omaha.

Omaha is not only a very pretty kitty, she's got all the guts of James Bond, and plenty of brains too! Nobody could call her unfeminine, and she sure ain't helpless ...

Although Omaha is a present-day heroine, in comics there are options for brief forays into the near or distant past or future for adventures of an alternate format. Please talk it over with Reed.

Fred Lee Cain
613 Huntoon
Topeka, Kansas 66612

When last I spoke with Denis Kitchen, his Kitchen Sink Press was making plans on publishing another "adults only" Omaha story. You and I both hope it will appear before too long.

Gentlemen:

I know you think you're the good guys.

I know your masthead disclaimer says "No actual persons, living or dead, without satiric content are intended or should be inferred."

I'm pretty sure your purpose in publishing E-Man is to entertain and amuse by poking fun at "characters and incidents" you conceive as over-revered, or at least deserving of a poke.

But I hope you actually wanted to create a different effect than you did cause — on me, anyway — with issue #5, "Getting Void." Because reading it was like getting kicked in the stomach by Superman in a bad mood. I didn't find it funny, or refreshing, or enlightening. It struck me as upsetting, malicious and very thinly disguised.

I guess nobody likes to see his own sacred cow barbequed, and that, I will grant you, you did very neatly — butchered and grilled in as superficially accurate a skewered parody as I have ever seen.

Even if you were only intending some innocent fun, making ha-ha's at the expense of a controversial, under-represented and aggressive movement with obviously idiotic pretensions, there are some people in the world who consider the reality behind your satiric facade, Scientology, as their hope for spiritual freedom. And however foolish that hope may be in your opinion, it is dear to my heart and your efforts to belittle it have hurt me. Up until now I haven't been in the habit of expecting this kind of pain from my comics.

Well, you learn something every day.

Marian Gibbons
P.O. Box 90
Carmichael, CA 95608

The issue of under-representation aside, if we can't make ha-ha's at the expense of (your words) "a controversial ... aggressive movement with obviously

idiotic pretensions," who can we make ha-ha's at?

E-Mans:

Why is it every time I try to break with a comic someone puts a masterwork on sale, and I must reevaluate.

I like E-Man, I really do, and the pseudo-science of FLOATINGETHICS, and its influence on E-Man's life are a kill. I get tired of the L. Ron Hubbard style of Dyanetic commercials, as well as the I'm OK tripe spewed forth constantly. I'm glad there is someone around to put it all in irreverent perspective.

I'm also glad to see the "valley girl" getting her due. E-Man is a perfect vehicle for letting our world get a well deserved "OH come on ... get real." E-Man is letting us see what's going on around us.

Although I don't believe the world is as apathetic as you let us believe. Still, the only way to prevent apathy is to make people aware of it. Not that they'd care...

Further, I haven't read and enjoyed sociology and sociological implications as well as I did when Howard the Duck #10 (Back to the Egg) came out. E-Man, like Howard, and even the early episodes of Mork and Mindy, just go to prove how whacked out our world is, and how we don't realize it. Thanks for making me think.

Charles B. Cockett Jr.
353 McComb Avenue
Cheyenne, WY 82007

Dear Mike, Marty, and Joe:

86 Einstein. If you must have a host and narrator, how about that Quantas Airline Poster Child ... err ... Bear. You know. Teddy Q.

John Brittan
11 Fleetwood Drive
Daly City, CA 94015

O.K.

Dear Mike,

How much praise can one comic book receive before getting a swelled letterhead? E-Man shall be the first to know! Not since the marvelous pages of Not Brand Ecch have I seen such hilarity. Martin Pasko and Joe Staton are satirists that Jonathan Swift would applaud (before rolling over in his grave). Pasko's handling of the complex storyline of Swamp Thing filled me with admiration while making my head spin, and I loved Staton's rendition of Green Lantern. Together, they are quite a team.

My favorite aspect of E-Man is the endless profusion of tiny sight gags that keep my eyes sharply attentive. In issue #5 they were: the Channel 13 totebag, the cop paying the prostitute, window washers falling, ever-changing alligator shirts, the synthetic sheep, Ed Koch's dartboard, and the poignant Homeless Bag Lady Memorial. Gentlemen, please keep the insanity going.

Mark A. Santillo
42 East Drive
Woodbury, NY 11797

NEXT MONTH: Mauser and Donald have turned up something dirty in Barrentown, PA, and it just might be the menace of Black Lung ... and it just might be the secret of Nova Kane! Either way, **E-Man's** in for a tough time ... all courtesy of **Martin Pasko** (plot), **Paul Kupperberg** (script), **Joe Staton** (pencils) and **Rick Burchett** (inks). We'll see you there.

— Mike Gold

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THE ORIGINS OF "INDEPENDENT" COMICS PART 1

by CHARLES MEYERSON

Every medium has its pioneers: The newspaper, Horace Greeley; broadcast journalism, Edward R. Murrow; animation, Walt Disney. The comics industry has its trailblazers, too — most recently, those responsible for opening what's become its fastest-growing field, the direct sales market.

The so-called new publishers — including First Comics, of course — have a lot of people to thank, people who were among the first to produce comics for discerning individuals who seek out specific artists or writers, who have a more active involvement with the medium than merely buying what appears to be interesting ... "the fan market," as it's called. People like Mike Friedrich, Dave and Deni Sim, Jack Katz, Wendy and Richard Pini ... and, most importantly, Wallace Wood.

Here's Charles Meyerson's look back on what may have been the first professional direct sales comic book.

* * *

For me, it began with a small note on the letters page of *Mad* 112, dated July 1967:

"Have you heard about Wally Wood's new magazine, *Witzend* which features some of the best comic artists in the world ... and sells for the amazing price of $1.00?"

It was signed "Wallace Wood" ... and followed by an editor's note: "No, we haven't, and we resent our letter column being used for such crass commercial purposes as this plug."

Crass it may have been, but it was one of the few channels open to promote what at the time was an expensive experiment. After all, comic books were still 12¢.

Wally Wood died in 1981 — an untimely end to a career highlighted by work at EC, a career that encompassed nearly every major publisher. But *Witzend* is still published by his one-time assistant, Bill Pearson, also the editor at Charlton Comics:

"Woody thought if the artists did their best work, society would discover and support it. It was a naive idea at the time, because we had no distribution at all. We had no way to get it seen ... and nowhere to sell it; it was all by subscription. We built a subscription list of about 3,000 names, eventually." Pearson says little notes like the one in *Mad* and in *Galaxy* would win about 50 subscribers each.

THE CONCEPT ORIGINATED in 1966 with another of Wood's assistants, Dan Adkins. "Dan wanted to put out a fanzine (a comics fan magazine), mainly to get his own characters out there," Pearson says. A finished product made for a slicker presentation to publishers.

Limited-edition comics publications until then had almost all been projects by fans, interested mainly in writing about or drawing characters owned by Marvel, DC or out-of-business publishers. *Witzend* was one of the first efforts by professionals to publish their own work, featuring characters they created and owned.

Publicized mostly through those other limited-edition magazines, the first issue of *Witzend* came out in the summer of 1966. It featured work by Wood, and a collaboration by Al Williamson and Frank Frazetta. "Most contributors got nothing except their work in print," Pearson says. "It was very important for them to get their copyright on the material. Look back at those issues: our copyright notes were in 18-point type. We wanted to be sure everyone would see them ... because at the time there was none of this 'sharing the rights with the creators.' It was a real breakthrough."

The first issue went back to press twice, for a total run of about 3,000 copies. *Witzend* #7 (1970) hit a peak of only 6,000. "It was never a money-making venture," Pearson says. "And when it became obvious I wasn't going to be able to maintain a regular schedule, we had to give up subscriptions."

TWELVE ISSUES OVER 17 years is not a publication record to make others envious. Ah, but the *contents!*

Witzend #3 featured the debut of Steve Ditko's "Mr. A," a humorless, no-compromise crimefighter who showed some of us a side of Ditko we never knew. And it gave us an idea what Spider-Man might have been like without Stan Lee. (Issue #7 included a two-page "rebuttal": A Pearson/Tim Battersby satire titled "Mr. E, Master of Mayhem by "Steve Diktato".)

Witzend #4 offered the debut of Wood's "Wizard King" illustrated serial, which he later expanded (for his own series, *Woodwork*). The character design for "Wizard King" may have served as inspiration for Wendy and Richard Pini's *Elfquest.*

Witzend #7 cover-featured a story by the late Vaughn Bode (very much alive at the time), including characters which — along with Wood's — would later serve as models for Ralph Bakshi's animated film, "Wizards." And it featured early work by Berni Wrightson.

PEARSON SAYS CONTRIBUTORS thought of *Witzend* as "a showplace — a place they wanted their work to be seen." Ditko, he says, was so enthusiastic he even helped with the envelope-stuffing and other routine work. Even after Wood left — selling Pearson his publishing company for the grand sum of $1.00 — Pearson says Wood didn't like to see an issue without some Wood work in it. (Pearson is quick to point out that, in addition to that single dollar, he agreed to fulfill Wood's guarantees to subscribers — several thousand dollars worth of printing and postage expenses.)

To fans and pros in the 1960s and '70s who were used to comics produced under the strict-standards of the Comics Code Authority, *Witzend* was another world. Women went naked or semi-naked (some in fashions that might pass the Code today ... but not then). Blood flowed more freely. Don Martin's characters engaged in bodily functions you wouldn't have seen in *Mad.*

At the time, I found it a little disturbing, at first. I had trouble accepting comics characters who did that stuff. But it grew on me; and Wood and Co. made clear they weren't in it for popular acclaim or money. Editorial, *Witzend* #2:

"We will not have page after page of (ads for) absolutely essential products like pimple creams, two-mile binoculars or fetish pictures to hustle. We are counting on ... your appreciation of our material."

It was the foundation for a publishing revolution leading eventually to Mike Friedrich's *Star*Reach,* Dave Sim's *Cerebus,* the Pinis' *Elfquest,* major concessions to creators at the established companies, and, of course, to the creation of First Comics. But, in Pearson's words, "It's an antique now. There are markets now paying for material that is pure expression by the artist. That was our whole thing: that artists could do their own work and writers could create their own stories."

Does the new and growing market for creator-owned comics mean that independent, non-profit publications like *Witzend* are doomed? Pearson doesn't think so: "There'll always be people so interested in putting out their own product, from cover to cover, that they'll still want to publish their own material — people who have to do every bit of it themselves."

* * *

(Charles Meyerson is a reporter and the morning news anchor for WXRT radio (93.1 FM) in Chicago. He's been writing about comics ever since 1964, when his first fan-letter appeared in Herbie #7.)

BUCK GODOT • ZAP-GUN for HIRE IN THE GAUNTLET

BUCK- I'VE GOT A SHIPMENT COMING INTO BAY 37. I WANT YOU TO PICK IT UP FOR ME.
OKAY, AL. IF YOU GOT THE DIME I GOT THE TIME.
HERE YOU GO-- CONSIGNMENT 877. PACK CODE 3.
PACK 3? THAT'S A TOP SECURITY CODE. WHAT IS THIS STUFF?
I'LL BET IT'S SOME REALLY EXOTIC STUFF FOR THE BAR!
FREEZE, GODOT!
?
ZOWNT!
JUNIOR
I NEVER DID KNOW WHAT WAS GOOD FOR ME.
ZOWNT!
JUST GIVE US THE BOX- IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU...
AHRR!
LATER
AL! WHAT THE HELL IS IN HERE? EVERYBODY ON THE PLANET WANTS IT!
NOT SURPRISING THEY'RE MY FAVORITE SNACKS...
MOSTESS Hee-Haws!
HEE-HAWS? I SHOT MY WAY THROUGH HELL AND BACK FOR HEE-HAWS?!
YEAH- WANT ONE?!
WHY, NO - I'LL LET YOU EAT THEM ALL!!
HAUMPH!
YOU'LL HAVE A FIRE FIGHT WITH EVERY BITE OF MOSTESS HEE-HAWS!

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